



# **LABOUR'S MANIFESTO FOR THE SOUTH EAST**

# FOREWORD

**Britain needs a government that works for the whole country. When Labour says we stand for the many not the few, we mean we will build a fairer country, where no one is held back and every community has its fair share of wealth and power.**

The harmful inequality that scars our society is not an act of God or a law of physics. It is the result of deliberate Conservative government policy that has made us one of the most unequal countries in Europe – both between the billionaires at the very top and everybody else, and between the different parts of the UK.

It's time to bring a divided country together so we can get on with delivering the real change Britain needs. To drive that change we will unleash a record investment blitz, getting the economy moving in every corner of our country.

This is about the jobs at the end of your road. It's about breathing new life into your area; reviving your high street; restoring the pride to your community.

Our investment blitz will upgrade our infrastructure in every town, city and region, and rebuild our schools, hospitals, care homes and housing. This is investment on a scale our country has never known.

Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives tried to wipe out British industry in the 1980s. This Conservative government is continuing that legacy. Over the last decade almost half a million manufacturing jobs have been lost.

The wealthy and powerful who have the system rigged in their favour will tell you that real change isn't possible. They'll say it's unrealistic. They'll say we cannot afford decent housing, free education, or well-paid, secure jobs.

But we know change is not only possible, but necessary. This election is our last chance to tackle the climate and environmental emergency and a once in a generation chance to transform our country, take on the vested interests and ensure that no community is left behind

So the next Labour government will rebuild our economy and bring our country back together by kick-starting a Green Industrial Revolution that will make every region a world-leader in green industries – the cutting edge industries of the future.

Labour will put wealth and power in the hands of the many. Boris Johnson's Conservatives, who think they're born to rule, will only look after the privileged few.

So we're going after the tax dodgers. We're going after the dodgy landlords. We're going after the bad bosses. We're going after the big polluters. Because we know whose side we're on – your side.

And when Labour wins, the nurse wins, the pensioner wins, the student wins, the office worker wins, the engineer wins. Every region wins. We all win.



**Jeremy Corbyn,**  
**Leader of the Labour Party**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Labour will unlock the potential of everyone by building a fairer Britain. A Britain in which we care for each other, in which wealth and power are shared, and in which every part of the country gets its fair share of investment and its say in shaping our future.

Years of under-investment and neglect by Westminster have left too many parts of the South East stuck with underpaid jobs, low productivity and slow growth.

Under the Tories, too many people in the South East are struggling to make ends meet or finding that work is no longer a way out of poverty. Across the UK pay has stagnated while insecurity and inequality have risen. Wages are still lower than before the financial crisis, while across the country dividends paid to shareholders are up 85%.

A decade of Tory cuts has pushed public services in the South East to breaking point.

Labour has a plan to deliver real change for the South East.

We will kick start a Green Industrial Revolution that will tackle the climate crisis while creating 110,000 good jobs in the South East and expanding automotive and offshore and onshore wind industries.

We will make sure everyone has enough to live on and eradicate in-work poverty in our first term by tackling the causes of poverty and inequality, such as low pay and high living costs, while raising the floor provided by our social safety net.

We will rebuild our public services and make them the best and most extensive in the world, paid for by creating a fairer taxation system in which those with the broadest shoulders pay a little more and everyone pays what they owe.

**Labour is on the South East's side.**

## **2. Top commitments for the South East**

- **£19 billion new investment from Labour's Green Transformation Fund including expanding Southampton Port and upgrading its fabrication yard, offshore and onshore wind, and South Coast rail capacity improvements**
- **Connect 3.9 million households and businesses to full-fibre Broadband**
- **24,000 new council and social homes a year by the end of the parliament**
- **110,000 new well-paid green jobs**
- **An immediate pay rise for 915,000 workers aged 16 and over**

# 3. Transforming the South East

## 3.1 Labour's Green Industrial Revolution

**Labour's Green Industrial Revolution will make the South East wealthier and healthier, putting our economy and climate on a stable footing to thrive in the 21st century.**

For centuries the South East has been shaped by its great ports, harbours, and trade links to the rest of the world. It is both densely populated and home to some of the country's most treasured landscapes.

But in recent years the economy of the South East has been marked by under investment in coastal towns and transport infrastructure, and a rising cost of living that has not been matched by wage growth, pricing many people out of its towns and cities. The South East has suffered from a decade of Tory austerity, and now faces the threat of a Tory no-deal Brexit that would bring chaos to the region.

Labour will invest in the South East through a Green Industrial Revolution, investing £19 billion from Labour's Green Transformation Fund that includes:

- Upgrading the housing of almost all of the 3.7 million households across the South East, reducing bills, eliminating

the vast majority of fuel poverty, and making our homes healthier and more comfortable.

- Investment in onshore and offshore wind, creating over 2,000 jobs.
- Expanding Southampton port and upgrading its fabrication yard to make sure the region can fully capitalise on the opportunities from wind power.
- Investment in tidal stream technology to harness the reliable, renewable power of the tides that surround the South East and establish the region as a global leader in this emerging technology.
- Investment in manufacturing electric vehicles and expanding the electric vehicle charging network, protecting the 17,000 workers directly employed in the automotive sector in the South East, while reducing emissions and improving air quality.
- Small-scale, community-level and large-scale solar power, creating 2,600 jobs.
- Plastic recycling facilities, match funded by the private sector, so that the UK no longer relies on exporting its plastic waste to the rest of world.
- Upgrading the internet connection of 3.9 million households and businesses to Full-Fibre Broadband – the highest

possible standard of connectivity.

- Planting more than 39 million new trees across the South East by 2024, creating 13,285 hectares of new forest in areas such as the Chilterns.

If you live, work or do business in the South East you will benefit from Labour's Green Industrial Revolution.

It will mean 110,000 new skilled, well-paid jobs in the South East that will last long into the future. Labour's new climate apprenticeships will ensure local people can access these jobs and become the engineers, technicians and construction workers of tomorrow.

It will mean new opportunities for businesses working across the region, such as those specialising in renovation and home maintenance and a growing local economy, with new wealth rippling out across all sectors.

And because Labour will take a public stake in new projects, we will improve towns and cities across the South East by reinvesting profits in our public spaces.

### 3.2 Local transport

**For these new green industries to flourish and grow, and for the hundreds of thousands of new green jobs to be accessible to communities across the South East, they must be connected to the wider economy. This requires decent public transport.**

The South East has seen years of underfunding in all forms of transport. Spending per person was £646 lower than in London last year.

If the Tories win the General Election, transport funding to the South East will continue to be £2,744 per head lower than in London over the years ahead.

Labour will end this unfairness by investing to improve public transport across the South East, including Crossrail 2 and South Coast rail improvements

### 3.3 Devolving Spending

**Labour will make sure that investment is spread evenly across the whole country by giving powers and funding to the South East. We will bring about a radical shift of power in Britain away from Westminster so that local people and communities have more control over their own lives and prospects.**

We will create an Office of Government in the South East to co-ordinate policies at the regional level, and ensure the South East has a voice in Whitehall.

A Local Transformation Fund will be used exclusively to fund infrastructure projects decided at a local level by people in the South East.

Labour will create a South East Development Bank to make sure the South East gets its share of investment for small businesses, infrastructure

projects and funding for new growth industries. Priorities for lending will be set by boards made up of key local stakeholders such as local chambers of commerce, trade unions and councillors giving the South East a new and powerful lever to rebuild its economy on its own terms.

Under the Tories, bank branches are closing, small businesses are struggling to access finance, and high streets are being decimated by store closures and job losses.

Labour's new publicly owned Post Bank, run through the Post Office network, will provide loans for small businesses, coops and social enterprises. 396 Post Office branches across the South East will host the Post Bank, providing the people of the South East with face-to-face, trusted and affordable banking and free support and advice on how to launch, manage and grow a business.

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## 4. Work and social security

**Work should provide a decent life for all, guaranteeing not just dignity and respect in the workplace, but also the income and leisure time to allow for a fulfilling life outside it.**

Labours will rapidly introduce a Real Living Wage of £10 an hour giving a pay rise to approximately 915,000 workers aged 16 and over, across the South East, and use the savings to the public finances to help small businesses manage the extra cost.

We will end insecure and precarious work for approximately 153,000 people in the South East by banning zero-hour

contracts and giving workers a right to a contract that reflects the hours they regularly work.

The Tories' flagship social security programme, Universal Credit (UC) has been a catastrophe. It has pushed thousands of people into poverty, caused families to lose their homes and forced parents to visit food banks in order to feed their children.

Labour will scrap UC and replace it with a system dedicated to dignity, universalism and ending poverty. We will spare 613,000 people in the South East set to be on UC by immediately



stopping people moving onto it and designing an alternative system that treats people with dignity and respect.

Over the course of three years we will end people's dependence on food banks. In 2018/19, Trussell Trust food banks handed out 149,000 three-day emergency food parcels to people in crisis across the South East. That included 55,000 parcels to children.

We will also bring justice to 516,000 women born in the 1950s across the South East whose State Pension age has been unfairly changed by the Tories. We have a historic debt of honour to them and Labour will offer pay-outs of up to £31,000, with an average of £15,000, to compensate them.

We will maintain the Triple Lock on state pensions, protecting the incomes of 1.7 million pensioners across the South East.

The Tory decision to u-turn on their manifesto pledge and end the free TV license for over-75s is set to affect almost 599,000 households across the South East, costing pensioners in the region a total of £90 million. Labour will reverse this cruel and unnecessary cut, and restore free TV licences for over-75s.



## 5. Public Services

### 5.1 National Education Service

**Education makes our economy stronger, our society richer and our people more fulfilled. Whether it is businesses finding people with the right skills, a tech start-up making our economy more dynamic or more people in better paid work and able to contribute to public services, we all benefit from an educated society.**

The Conservatives have starved our education system of funding, transferring costs onto students, staff and communities and those in need have lost out most.

That's why our National Education Service will be at the heart of Labour's plan for real change

We will reverse cuts to Sure Start so that all communities across the South East have access to a Sure Start centre in their area.

We will give all 2, 3 and 4-year olds 30 hours of free preschool education per week and access to additional hours at affordable, subsidised rates staggered with incomes. In the South East this will provide free childcare to over 277,000 children, saving families between £412 and £6,249 a year.

As a result of Tory underfunding there are now 4,357 unqualified teachers across the South East and almost 86,000 primary school children in over-sized classes.

Labour will make sure schools are properly funded to guarantee that every school in the South East has a qualified teacher in front of every class and is open a full five days a week, and to cap primary school class sizes at 30.

As a result of Tory failure there are now an extra 93,000 children in working households living in poverty in the South East. To tackle this crisis, Labour will 'poverty-proof' schools, providing a free school meal to almost 733,000 primary school children in the South East, encouraging breakfast clubs, and tackling the cost of school uniforms.

## **5.2 NHS and Social Care**

**The National Health Service is one of Labour's proudest achievements. The right to free-at-the-point-of-use healthcare, universal and comprehensive in scope, is socialism in action.**

A decade of Tory health cuts and privatisations has pushed our greatest institution to the brink. Our hospitals are crumbling, we have a shortage of 43,000 nurses, and patients are left waiting far too long.

In the South East Commissioning Region, the number of people waiting

for an operation has now reached over 645,000.

Since 2010, the number of people waiting longer than 4 hours in A&E has soared. In the first 6 months of 2019/20, over 188,000 people waited more than 4 hours in A&E in the South East

A Labour government will invest in the NHS to give patients the modern, well-resourced services they need. We will increase expenditure across the health sector by an average 4.3% a year.

We will end the social care crisis that has left 1.5 million elderly people across the country without the care they need. A Labour government will build a comprehensive National Care Service for England.

We will start by providing free personal care to all older people who need it, and seek to extend this to all working-age adults.

## **5.3 Police and crime**

**Government has a duty to keep people safe. Our communities were endangered when the Conservatives took 2,163 police officers off the streets of the South East.**

Government funding to police services has been cut by £390 million across forces in the South East. As a result there are 2,163 fewer officers, 570 fewer police community support officers and 2,939 fewer police staff.

In the last year, recorded crime across the South East increased by 4%, including violence which is up 12% and robbery which has increased 21%. Over the past five years, knife crime in the South East has risen by 132%.

Last year the police recorded over 6 million offences, but the proportion leading to a charge or summons fell to its lowest level on record – thanks to Tory cuts, less than one in ten crimes now lead to a suspect being charged.

A Labour government will invest in policing to prevent crime and make our communities safer.

We will rebuild the whole police workforce across the country, recruiting more police officers, police community support officers and other staff. We will re-establish neighbourhood policing and recruit 2,000 more frontline officers than the Conservatives.

In addition to our commitment to recruit more frontline officers, we will guarantee a nationwide network of youth clubs and other services for young people as a way of tackling problems such as mental ill-health and school exclusions, as well as involvement in knife and drug crime.



## 6. Communities, Local Government and Housing

**Tory cuts, which have been deliberately targeted at the poorest areas of the country, have plunged our councils into crisis and pushed many services to breaking point. The South East has seen 17% of funding stripped from council budgets by consecutive Tory governments.**

Labour will reverse the Tory decade of austerity for local government and aim to restore council spending powers to 2010 levels over the lifetime of the Parliament, meaning more money for key local services such as libraries and bin collections.

The country is facing a housing crisis. The number of socially rented homes built has fallen over the past decade by 4,554 to 1,085 last year in the South East, while private rent has gone up by an average of £2,460 over the last 10 years. Labour will be building 24,000 new council and social rent homes in the South East a year by the end of the parliament.

Labour will also deliver new discounted homes for first-time buyers and a new charter of rights for private renters.

No one should sleep without a roof over their head in one of the richest countries in the world. But under the Tories, the number of people sleeping rough has more than doubled.

In the South East, at least 934 people slept rough last year. Labour will end rough sleeping within five years, with a national plan driven by a Prime Minister-led taskforce.

We will tackle the wider causes of homelessness, raising the Local Housing Allowance in line with the 30th percentile of local rents, and earmarking an additional £1 billion a year for councils' homelessness services.





## 7. Environment

**Nearly a decade of Tory neglect has led to more litter on our streets, with reported incidences of fly-tipping rising by 19 per cent across the South East since 2012.**

In government, Labour will implement a comprehensive Waste and Recycling Strategy, investing £200 million in new plastics recycling facilities for the South East and introducing new measures such as bottle recycling schemes.

More than 3.8 million people across the South East live in areas where air quality is illegally poor, with Portsmouth, Brighton and Reading among the most

polluted parts of the country. The Tories have lost in court three times over their failure to reduce air pollution, but Labour will introduce a new Clean Air Act to tackle the problem head-on.

We will create 10 new National Parks in areas such as the Chilterns, and will increase funding for existing National Parks including the South Downs and the New Forest.

